

## [Ezekiel Paris]

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Range-lore

Ruby Mosley

San Angelo, Texas. [???

RANGE-LORE

Ezekiel Paris and wife, Melinda Summerfoot Paris, came from Ireland to Mississippi at a very early age. This family grew to be larger as three boys and three girls were added; they later moved near Macon, Georgia where J. P. Paris entered the circle in 1855. When J. P. Paris grew up he began to wonder what the other part of the world looked like and began to ramble. He had heard of the western country, cattle and cowboys, then became attracted in this direction. He rode the range and rounded cattle from the Rio Grande to the Red River, fought with Indians and helped to settle up these parts, [???] Texas 2 at one time being a cattle and land owner. At present he resides alone in a little one room shack where he feels free to cook, eat, sleep, and spit tobacco juice where and whenever he pleases, reminiscing of the olden days on the range, his only income being his pension. He saw an over-grown boy out in the street and remarked, "It's a pity lightning don't strike that thing, he ain't got as much sense as a summer coon." His main thought was of the wilds, and he wished for the happiest days of his life to return, when people had money and could shoot any time and place they wished. Mr. Paris also remarked that his people didn't think any more of him than an old tin can that was in his front door. This old fellow is still modern in one respect and that concerns his admiration for the feminine sex.

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"If you get me started out on the wild and woolly western parts I'll have you hung before we get started," says J. P. Paris of San Angelo, Texas.

"Confound you, why didn't you come at me right, let me get a stick. I thought you was one of them pension folks, (investigators).

"You know I'm the only one of my bunch left, old Bob Owens just stopped right off and left me; they put him in the ground a while back. The old boys I used to ride the hills and shoot Indians with were Leo Corder, Bill Kendrick, Charlie Price, Riley Trout and Finis Lindsey; they have every one gone on to glory land and left me here by myself. I wish I could go over the same thing again that the boys and I went through with, riding the 3 range and shootin' Indians. Those were my best days. We boys got a kick out of turning a "summer-set" over our horse's head into a heap of [cacti?].

"In the early 70's our gang was takin' some cattle from Langtry, near the Rio Grande, to North Texas. When we got out here close to the Twin Mountains near San Angelo, I went on ahead to see if we could cross the creek but when I got back we were surrounded by Indians. Boy, how we cut 'em down; them machine guns ain't nothing beside the gang we had. We killed about thirty-five Indians and they threw some rocks on their own at the foot of the mountains across the trail from the Twin Mountains.

"Out on the plains, Indians were chased by everybody, when they were being sent to be civilized.

"I wish you could have seen a bunch of Indians we got drunk. They would run over us, jump on us and they didn't have a lick of sense.

"This side of Amarillo the Comanches, Cherokees, and many whites all came up together in a big fight. I could have picked up a wagon load of skulls if I'd had a wagon.

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"When those rough guys would come in to the ranch we always sent the cowgirls back in to Fort Worth. The cowboys were always pretty tough guys when they entered the gang, for they were usually outlaws that had come in from the East. We really had some two-gun cowgirls that could really shoot and to kill; they could swing a 4 rope and bring up what you asked for.

"One time we were going out and had a bunch of new men on, so we went to a little town, took the guns from the officers and gave them to the boys, we sure gave them fits.

"I never did see Jessie, Frank and John James but one time. They [ran?] the Indians out of a cave up in Red Canyon one time. Every one thought Jessie put some stolen money in the cave.

"Good Lord, recon I have gone up the trail, I took cattle from South Texas to the deepest water holes you have ever seen, up in Dallas County. (Then he sang "Rambling Cowboy"). We used to start out yelling and singing that old song so loud that we were heard for many miles.

"We went through a little town on Red River, singing as loud as we could. The peace officer asked us what we wanted for dinner, that he would have the gals fix it. We yelled back, 'Fish and frogs', but we went on our way. The girls all wanted a cowboy sweetheart.

"Old Booger Red once lived right by me. He stole a lot of stuff out of a store and was sent to the pen, but they soon let him go. He said that they told him to go back and rob a couple more stores."